

**MINUTES OF THE
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS INTERIM COMMITTEE**
Wednesday, June 18, 2008 – 2:00 p.m. – Room C450 State Capitol

Members Present:

Sen. Peter C. Knudson, Senate Chair
Rep. Douglas C. Aagard, House Chair
Sen. Brent H. Goodfellow
Rep. Ron Bigelow
Rep. DeMar Bud Bowman
Rep. Glenn A. Donnelson
Rep. Lorie D. Fowlke
Rep. Keith Grover
Rep. Neil A. Hansen
Rep. Neal B. Hendrickson
Rep. Curtis Oda
Rep. Larry B. Wiley

Members Absent:

Sen. Gregory S. Bell
Pres. John L. Valentine
Rep. Eric K. Hutchings
Rep. John G. Mathis

Staff Present:

Mr. Benjamin N. Christensen, Policy Analyst
Mr. Eric N. Weeks, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Chelsea Barrett, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Aagard called the meeting to order at 2:19 p.m.

MOTION: Rep. Bowman moved to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2008 meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Grover absent for the vote.

2. State Capitol Complex Construction Projects and Plans -- Update

Mr. David Hart, State Capitol Preservation Board, presented "Presentation to the Government Operations Committee." He explained that the State Capitol Preservation Board exercises jurisdiction and stewardship over capitol hill facilities, capitol hill grounds, and the State Capitol Complex, with the exception of certain areas reserved under legislative control. He noted that the Board is required to preserve, maintain, and restore the State Capitol Complex, facilities, and grounds. He updated the Committee on the annual work plan and a long-range master plan from the Board.

Mr. Hart explained the current status of the various small projects taking place in the Capitol, including the art work and exhibits being installed. He explained the current status of the remodel in the House and Senate buildings to allow for more legislator office space and to upgrade committee meeting rooms. Mr. Hart noted additional long-range master plans on the State Office Building, the White Chapel, Council Hall building, the Daughters of the Utah Pioneer Museum, and the Mormon Battalion monument. Currently, there is no schedule or funding for these projects.

Chair Aagard asked Mr. Hart to briefly review the prioritization process for improvement projects. Mr. Hart noted that typically these decisions are made through a joint effort with the Department of Facilities and Construction Management.

3. Election Law Changes

Mr. Michael Cragun, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, explained that under Utah Code Section

20A-1-300.6, the lieutenant governor is designated as Utah's chief elections officer. He explained that each year a number of election issues come up that require consideration by the Legislature. Most of the issues are technical and administrative in nature, other issues may require a more substantive policy determination.

Mr. Cragun presented and distributed "Office of the Lieutenant Governor - Election Issues for Consideration by the Government Operations Interim Committee - May 21, 2008," which included a list of the Lieutenant Governor's proposed changes in the election code for the Committee's preliminary consideration in preparation for the upcoming legislative session.

Mr. Cragun noted four proposed policy changes and other technical changes to the election code. The four major proposed policy issues included: (1) whether the declaration deadlines should be moved back because of the potential that the general session of the legislature may be moved back in response to a proposed constitutional amendment; (2) unaffiliated presidential candidate deadline changes; (3) statute language for local referenda; and (4) possibility of restoring the definition of "media owner" or repealing Utah Code Section 20A-11-102.

4. State Per Diem Standardization for State Agency Boards

Mr. Weeks presented "State Per Diem Language for State Agency Boards," a handout previously mailed to the Committee. He discussed the potential for standardization of state-paid per diem for state agency boards. He explained that of the 319 state agency boards identified in the Utah Code, 20 percent have no language addressing per diem or have non-standard language.

Mr. John Reedhead, Director, Division of Finance (DOF), noted that rates are adjusted for per diems by DOF, but that the current rates have not been adjusted for several years.

Chair Knudson asked to have DOF prepare recommendations on updating the paid per diem amounts.

Mr. Christensen noted that standardizing the per diem rates may significantly affect the fiscal note on bills that create boards.

The Committee discussed the possibility of standardizing per diem rates for all state agency boards.

MOTION: Chair Aagard moved to have staff prepare standard language for paid per diem for state agency boards that are not currently using standardized language and to have the DOF share recommendations to update the per diem amounts. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Grover absent for the vote.

5. Office of State Debt Collection -- Update

Ms. Kimberly Hood, Office of State Debt Collection (OSDC), Department of Administrative Services (DAS), explained that OSDC has overall responsibility for collecting and managing state receivables, developing consistent policies governing the collection and management of state receivables, and for overseeing and monitoring state receivables.

Mr. David Johnson III, OSDC, DAS, distributed and presented "Department of Administrative Services, Office of State Debt Collection, June 18, 2008." The presentation included statistical information

regarding receivables and over collections over the past fiscal year, including the reported \$284 million in outstanding receivables owned to the state.

Mr. Johnson reported that OSDC is undertaking a pilot program using bank and employer garnishments to collect debt. The pilot program also includes hiring two additional attorneys and adding more vendors to increase collection.

The Committee discussed the presentation.

Sen. Knudson and Rep. Bigelow requested to have OSDC present new information regarding the pilot programs progression next year.

6. Other Items / Adjourn

MOTION: Chair Aagard moved to have staff prepare draft legislation for items one and two on the policy issues and for items one through ten on the technical section of the proposed election law changes from the lieutenant governor's office. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Grover absent for the vote.

MOTION: Rep. Donnelson moved to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Grover absent for the vote.

Chair Aagard adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.